

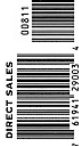
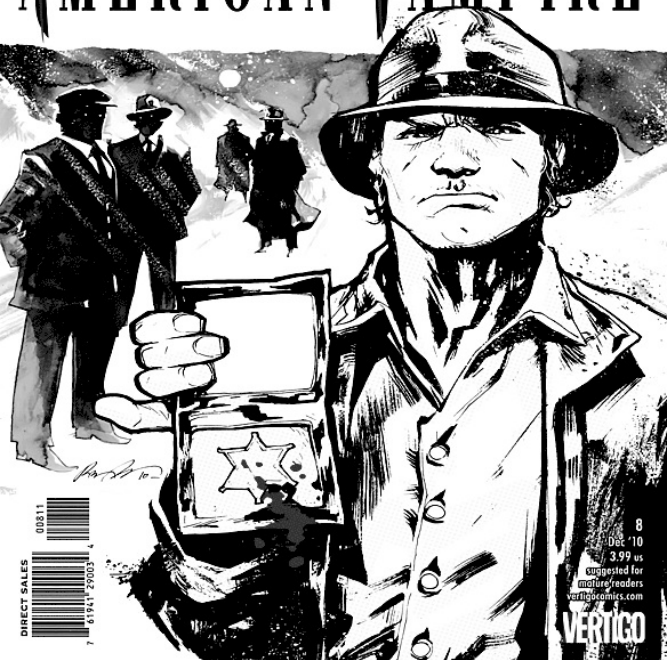
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THE NEW YORK TIMES BESTSELLER

SCOTT SNYDER RAFAEL ALBUQUERQUE

AMERICAN VAMPIRE



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Dec '10
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suggested for
mature readers
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VERTIGO

Arrowhead, California.

PEARL
JONEST

NO
NEED TO
BE ALARMED.
WE'RE JUST
HERE TO
CHAT.

AMERICAN VAMPIRE

DEVIL IN THE SAND PART THREE

WRITER: SCOTT SNYDER ARTIST: RAFAEL ALBUQUERQUE

COLORS: DAVE MCCAIG LETTERS: STEVE WANDS

COVER: RAFAEL ALBUQUERQUE EDITOR: MARK DOYLE

AMERICAN VAMPIRE CREATED BY SCOTT SNYDER



YOU ALWAYS
BRING GUNS
TO CHAT?



WHEN WE'RE
CHATTING WITH
VAMPIRES.
YES.



WHAT THE HELL ARE YOU TALKING
ABOUT, VAMPIRES? WHO ARE
YOU PEOPLE? I'M--

HENRY...



...IT'S OKAY.
I'VE BEEN
EXPECTING
THIS.



YOU
HAVE A LOVELY
H--

WHAT
DO YOU
WANT?



TO THE
POINT, OF
COURSE.



MY NAME IS LINDEN HOBBS. AND
THIS IS ABILENA BOCK.

WE WORK FOR AN
ORGANIZATION KNOWN
AS THE VASSALS OF THE
MORNING STAR. MANY
OF YOUR KIND ARE
FAMILIAR WITH US, AND
WHAT WE DO.

CAN I
ASSUME
YOU ARE,
TOO?

SORRY, I MUST HAVE MISSED THAT MEMO.

YOU COME HERE WITH GUNS, TALKING ABOUT "MY KIND." MY GUESS WOULD BE YOU'RE VAMPIRE-HUNTERS.

CLOSE. WE'RE VAMPIRE-KILLERS, MS. JONES, AND WE'VE BEEN DOING THIS FOR A VERY LONG TIME. WE'RE BLOODY GOOD AT IT, TRUTHFULLY.

SEE NOW THAT SOUNDS LIKE BRAGGING. AND HERE I THOUGHT YOU BRITS WERE KNOWN FOR YOUR MANNERS.

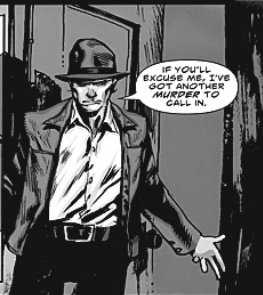
EASY, MS. JONES. WE COULDN'T KILL YOU IF WE WANTED TO. WHICH, QUITE FRANKLY, IS WHY WE'VE COME TODAY.

AS YOU MUST KNOW BY NOW, EVERY SPECIES OF VAMPIRE HAS AN ORGANIC, PATHOGENIC VULNERABILITY. A SINGULAR WEAKNESS PARTICULAR TO ITS KIND... WOOD. IRON. STEEL...

WHAT WE WANT IS FOR YOU TO TELL US YOURS.

LET ME GET THIS STRAIGHT. YOU WANT ME TO TELL YOU HOW TO KILL ME?

Las Vegas, Nevada.





WAIT, I JUST WANTED TO TELL YOU--

TELL ME ABOUT WHAT? THE WEREWOLVES AT THE APACHE? THE GOBLINS AT THE RITZ? DULY NOTED.



I WANTED TO TELL YOU THAT MY FATHER WAS A LAWMAN, TOO.

HIS NAME WAS JAMES BOOK, AND LIKE GUS, HE WAS KILLED IN THE LINE OF DUTY.



MURDERED BY JIM SMOKS. OR SKINNER SWEET AS HE WAS KNOWN BACK THEN. SWEET INFECTED HIM WITH HIS BLOOD, MY FATHER DIED FIGHTING THAT INFECTION BEFORE IT COULD TRANSFORM HIM INTO A MONSTER.



SO I PROMISE YOU, DESPITE WHAT YOU MIGHT THINK, THERE'S NOTHING FAKE ABOUT ANY OF THIS. IT'S AS REAL AS IT GETS.



YOU DONE?



SURE, I'M DONE. BUT JUST KNOW THAT THERE IS EVIL IN THE WORLD. REAL EVIL YOU CAN FIGHT IT, OR YOU CAN HIDE AND PRETEND IT DOESN'T EXIST. BUT EITHER WAY, YOU SHOULD GET READY...

"BECAUSE
BELIEVE ME, IT
WAS COME TO
YOUR CITY."





YOU'RE AFTER
SKINNER, AREN'T
YOU?

THAT'S
WHY YOU'RE
HERE.

LET ME
GUESS... YOU
COULDN'T KILL
HIM, SO YOU
TRIED STRIKING
SOME DEAL
WITH HIM
INSTEAD...

SO HOW'D
THAT WORK
OUT FOR
YOU?

IF YOU'D LIKE A GUESSING
GAME, WHY NOT TRY TO
GUESS HOW LONG IT TOOK
US TO FIND YOU, ONCE WE
BECAME AWARE OF YOUR
EXISTENCE?

THREE
WEEKS.

TWO AND A HALF,
ACTUALLY.

NOW WE MIGHT NOT KNOW HOW
TO KILL YOU, MS. JONES, BUT
LIKE I SAID, WE'VE BEEN DOING
THIS FOR A LONG, LONG TIME,
WE HAVE VERY DEEP POCKETS,
AND WE CAN CERTAINLY MAKE
LIFE PAINFUL FOR YOU.

AND
THOSE
YOU CARE
ABOUT...

NOW
WHAT'S YOUR
ANSWER?



YOU KNOW IT'S FUNNY... AS LONG AS I'VE BEEN THIS WAY, I'VE BEEN WAITING FOR YOU GUYS TO SHOW UP.



WELL NOT YOU SPECIFICALLY, BUT PEOPLE LIKE YOU--SOME GANG RUNNING AROUND WITH STAKES AND HAMMERS AND BALLOONS FULL OF HOLY WATER. I MEAN, I KNEW YOU HAD TO BE OUT THERE SOMEWHERE.



IT USED TO FRIGHTEN ME, ACTUALLY. I USED TO WONDER--WOULD I SEE YOU COMING? WOULD I EVEN FEEL IT WHEN YOU DID ME IN?



AND I'LL TELL YOU A SECRET. I USED TO WONDER IF IT WOULD EVEN BE A BAD THING-- YOU KILLING ME.



BECAUSE YOU'RE RIGHT, ABOUT THE BLOOD.

IT DOES HAVE A DARKNESS TO IT. I FEEL IT ALL THE TIME, TOO, THAT PULL. AND IT TERRIFIES ME.



THERE ARE DAYS I HAVE TO FIGHT IT OFF. TO REMIND MYSELF OVER AND OVER WHO I AM.



BUT THE FACT IS, I HAVEN'T KILLED ANYONE SINCE 1925. ALL IN ALL, I'VE TRIED TO LIVE A GOOD LIFE WITH THE MAN I LOVE.

AND SO OVER TIME, I GUESS I STOPPED WORRYING ABOUT YOU PEOPLE SHOWING UP.





THE STRANGE THING IS, EVEN BACK WHEN I WORRIED ABOUT YOU, I NEVER, IN MY WILDEST DREAMS, EXPECTED YOU TO SHOW UP ON MY DOORSTEP AND ASK TO MAKE SOME DEAL TO SELL OUT SKINNER SWEET.



SWEET
IS A DEMON, A
MONSTER.
PLEASE...

OH, HE'S AS BAD AS THEY COME. NO ONE KNOWS THAT MORE THAN ME, BUT FOR BETTER OR WORSE, HE SAVED ME THIS LIFE. AND NASTY AS HE IS, I'M NOT ABOUT TO HAND HIM OVER TO THE LIKES OF YOU.



SO I'M AFRAID
THE ANSWER IS NO. I'M NOT
BUYING. FEEL FREE TO TRY THE
NEXT HOUSE OVER THOUGH.

IT'S YOUR DECISION,
MS. JONES. IF,
HOWEVER, YOU CHANGE
YOUR MIND, WE'LL BE AT
THE BUNGAY JAR INN
UNTIL TOMORROW.



YOU'LL REGRET
THIS, JONES. I
PROMISE.



I'M
SHAKING.

DRIVE SAFE
NOW.



STILL NO
WORD AT THE
ISBELLE PLACE,
GLENNT?

NOTHING. MY
GUESS WOULD BE HE
TOOK OFF, PACKED HIS
STUFF AND HEADED EAST.
THAT'S WHAT I'D DO IF
SOMEONE MURDERED
TWO OF MY THREE
PARTNERS.



JUST KEEP TRYING. HE
PICKS UP, YOU TELL HIM TO
COME INTO THE STATION
AS SOON AS POSSIBLE SO
WE CAN PROTECT HIM
FROM WHATEVER'S
DOING THIS.

ME, I'M
GOING TO PAY
A VISIT TO
THE GRACIE
ESTATE.



WHOMEVER.

WHAT?

WHOMEVER'S
DOING THIS. YOU SAID
WHATEVER.

JUST KEEP
TRYING.

Krik



GOD
DAMMIT.



COME
ON. WE'RE
TAKING A
RIDE.

WHAT
CHANGED YOUR
MIND?

WHO SAYS
IT'S CHANGED?
TOMORROW I'M
CALLING YOU IN. BUT
TONIGHT, WE GOT A
MURDERER TO CATCH,
AND VAMPIRE OR NOT,
HE'S MOVING FAST,
SO I NEED ALL
THE HELP I
CAN GET.



YOU WANT ME
TO TAKE ROUTE 35 OR 12,
MR. ISBELLE?

WHICHEVER
GETS US AWAY
FROM HERE
QUICKEST,
NIGEL.

I'LL TELL
YOU WHAT,
BOY, PEOP-E
SAY--

JESUS!
WHAT IN THE
HELL WAS
THAT?!

NIGEL?





THAT
DIDN'T
ANSWER MY
QUESTION...



...ASSUMING FOR ONE
CRAZY SECOND THAT IT IS A
"VAMPIRE" DOING THIS, HOW IS IT
YOUR ORGANIZATION KNEW TO
SEND YOU TWO HERE BEFORE THE
MURDERS STARTED HAPPENING?



ABOUT A
MONTH AGO, CREDIBLE
INFORMATION CAME TO
US INDICATING THAT A
RARE KIND OF VAMPIRE,
AN OLDER SPECIES, WAS
NESTING IN LAS VEGAS.



WHY THE
CREATURE CHOSE
THIS CITY, OR THESE
PEOPLE--WE SIMPLY
DON'T KNOW--

HOLD IT.
IS THAT...
A CART?



YOU HAVE A VISUAL?

NO, NOTHING.



WELL, WE KNOW IT'S WINGED. COULD BE A CHIROPTERUS, BUT THE STRENGTH IT'D TAKE TO HEFT THE CAR...

LIMOUSINE. BLAINE ISBELLE'S LIMOUSINE.



NOW WE GOT ONE MAN LEFT TO PROTECT. SO JUST TELL ME THIS. YOU KNOW HOW TO KILL THIS THING, RIGHT?



CHIEF MCCOGAN, WELCOME TO OUR JURISDICTION.

Arrowhead, California.



Las Vegas, Nevada.



MR. GRACIE
I NEED YOU TO
OPEN UP!



WE BELIEVE YOU'RE IN IMMINENT
DANGER, ALL THREE OF YOUR
COLLEAGUES ARE DEAD AND--



SO IT
GOT ISBELLE,
TOO... COME
IN, QUICK.



WE TRIED
CALLING,
BUT--

CAN'T
AFFORD TO
ANSWER THE
PHONE, CHIEF.
WE'RE HUNKERED
DOWN TIGHT
HERE.



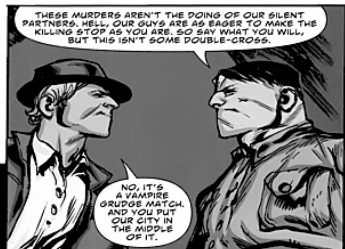
THAT MAY BE, BUT I
STRONGLY BELIEVE YOU'D
BE SAFER AT THE STATION,
WITH US, UNTIL WE FIGURE
OUT EXACTLY WHAT'S
GOING ON.



I'LL TELL YOU
WHAT'S GOING ON,
CHIEF, WE'RE AT
WAR TONIGHT.

AT WAR
WITH A GODDAMN
MONSTER
STRAIGHT OUT
OF HELL.









Arrowhead, California.



To be
continued...

ON THE LEDGE

EDITORIAL BY

PETER STRAUB

For my 60th birthday, my wife arranged for me to have a tour of the studio

and sets of *One Life To Live*. I'm crazy about OLT, and have been for decades. Before the tour, I signed some of my books for my favorite actors. One of these was Michael Easton, who plays the brooding Lt. John McCain of the Llanview, PA police department, one of OLT's most charismatic figures. I thought Easton did a great job of portraying a man who was very well defended without appearing at all defensive, and it seemed to me he might enjoy a novel of mine called *Koko*, a sort of literary-minded thriller.

A little while later along came a letter from Michael, telling me that my gesture had surprised and pleased him, not least because during the year that he had cared for his dying mother, one of the books she asked him to read aloud to her had been *Koko*.

This moved me, astounded me. Michael added that he had been working on a graphic novel called *Soul Stealer* and wondered if I might be willing to take a look at it and offer any advice that occurred to me. Sure, I said, come on over.

Soul Stealer led to many more get-togethers, drinks, meals and great conversations, usually at a friendly joint on W. 56th Street called O'Neils. (Can you say Pappy Van Winkle's? We did.) Very soon we were talking about a graphic novel of our own, based on the hellish background and Vietnam experiences of a twisted character I had once used in a novel, Fielding Bandolier. "Little Fee" made a great villain, and THE GREEN WOMAN delighted us both by turning into a stunningly dark, violent and beautiful story.

When we were finished John Bolton seemed to us the perfect artist for our book, and so he proved to be. Bolton's imagery, ripe with feeling, glowing, both tender and harsh, added the crucial element to *THE GREEN WOMAN*: John Bolton made *THE GREEN WOMAN* ravishing.

—Peter Straub

THE GREEN WOMAN

New York Times best-selling author Peter Straub resurrects his most sinister creation, Fielding "Fee" Bandolier, the unstoppable serial killer last seen in Straub's bestseller *The Throat*. Aging and tired of a life devoted to death, Fee is preparing to end his long career of bloodshed. By Straub, Easton and Bolton. On sale 10.6.10



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